
The Innocent Justice Foundation

Support Empower Educate

2018 Utah Council on
Victims of Crime Conference

www.innocentjustice.org

**THE
INNOCENT
JUSTICE
FOUNDATION** | Helping Rescue
Children From
Abuse

SHIFT

Supporting Heroes In mental health Foundational Training

When Saving Lives Damages Your Own



Supporting Heroes in mental health Foundational Training (SHIFT)

An Innocent Justice Foundation project funded by Department of Justice, OJJDP

funded by

Department of Justice, OJJDP ICAC Training & Technical Assistance



OJJDP



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Detective Andrew Chaulk
Vermont Attorney General's Office
Internet Crimes Against Children Taskforce

Beth Medina
CEO/Program Director - SHIFT
The Innocent Justice Foundation



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Objectives

- Introduction of SHIFT
- Introduction to vicarious trauma
- Understand and acknowledge the negative effects of chronic traumatic exposure
- Tools and techniques for building resilience



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SHIFT Core Foundational Blocks

What **SHIFT** is:

- Awareness/Education
- Preventative
- Custom solutions

What **SHIFT** isn't:

- Treatment/Counseling
- Fitness for duty
- Screening



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What is Vicarious Trauma?



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Vicarious Trauma



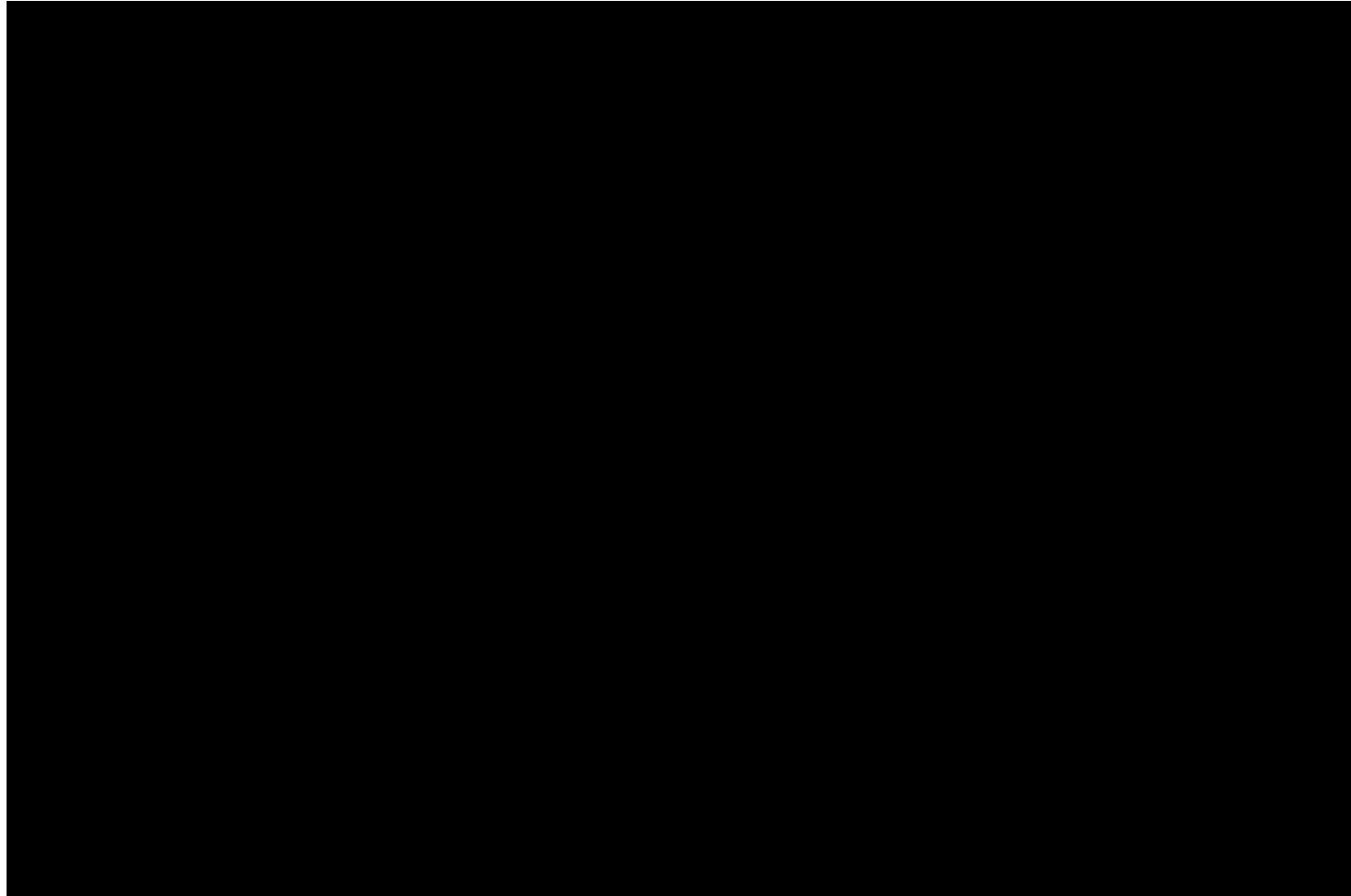
What happens to your neurological
(or cognitive), physical,
psychological, emotional and
spiritual health when you listen to
traumatic stories day after day or
respond to traumatic situations
*while having to control your
reaction*

<http://www.vicarioustrauma.com/whatis.html>



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Audience Participation

**Identify one challenge or impact
you have seen in yourself or your team
members due to vicarious trauma**



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What We Are Seeing

Increasing Cases – and Exposure

Victims: younger

Abuse: violent and sadistic

Contact with all parties involved in case

Unjust case decisions



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Overwhelmed Professionals

- Insufficient resources
- Many cases never investigated
- Triaging of cases (and ultimately victims!)
- Limits on the amount of help that can be given



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Overwhelmed Professionals

- Lack of understanding from general public
- Responsibility to protect community from possible re-offense
- Direct daily contact with offenders
- Increased caseload and severity of offenses

Aggravates negative effects



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Andy's Story

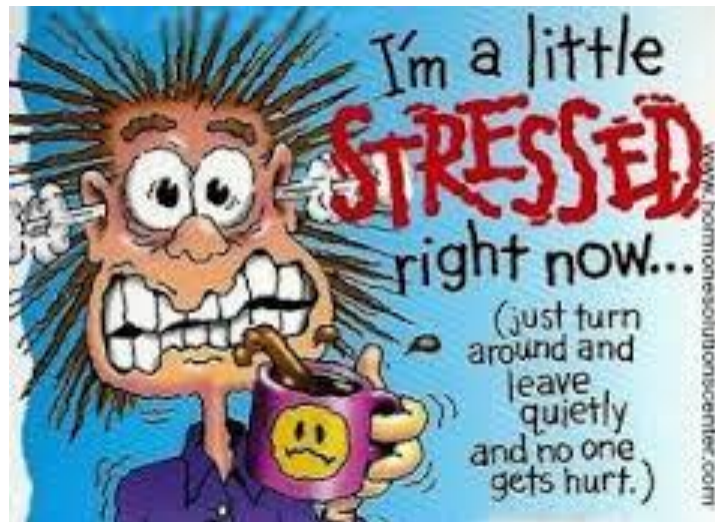


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Audience Participation

What are your signs of stress?



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Signs and Symptoms

Physical

Fatigue

Digestive Problems

Headaches

Sleeping Difficulties

Eating Habits –

Weight Loss/Gain

High Blood Pressure

Loss/Decrease Libido



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Signs and Symptoms

Intellectual/Cognitive

Decision Making Problems

Loss of concentration

Confusion

Forgetfulness

Low productivity

Negative attitude

Loss of sense of humor



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Signs and Symptoms

Emotional

Excessive emotion
Mood swings
Increased irritability
Anger
Sadness
Fear and worry
Loneliness-Isolation
Crying spells



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Signs and Symptoms

Behavioral

Numbing
Shutting down
Risk-taking
Drinking
Substance abuse
Driving fast-angry
Extramarital affairs



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Signs and Symptoms

Spiritual

- Extreme Religiosity
- Blaming or Feeling Abandon by God
- Difficulty Praying or Obsession on Fate
- A Change in Views of God, Your Life or Your World



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Symptoms of Chronic Exposure

Normal

non-persistent

non-intrusive

Warning Signs

persistent

mildly intrusive

Trouble Indicators

persistent

intrusive



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Who Is Affected

Directly
?

Indirectly
?



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Building Resilience

The Good News:

People who experience trauma and successfully integrate it, or recover, are stronger and more resilient than people in the general population.



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Building Resilience

- Presence and use of social support
- Ability to plan and take action
- Positive self assessment
- Communication and problem solving skills
- Tolerance and management of strong feelings and impulses

APA 2008



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Audience Participation

What are your healthy coping mechanisms?



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Proactive Trauma Prevention

- Reduced anxiety and stress
- Better focus and increased cognitive function
 - Overall improvement in health
 - Increase in retention of talent
 - Increase in effectiveness of unit



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Coping Skills During Exposure

Prepare for exposure

- Protect yourself
- Identify your task

De-escalate physiological response

- Tension
- Posture
- Breath
- Movement

Notice your responses



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**Mister Rogers did
not adequately
prepare me for the
people in my
neighborhood.**



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Coping Skills After Exposure

- Take regular breaks
- Rituals
- Physical movement
- Plan for next activity
- Write down things you are worried about
- No exposure prior to end of work day
- Work to home transitions



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Work Environment

- Location of family photos
- Tailoring your personal space
- Comfort - Ergonomics
- Inspirational images
- Educating Colleagues



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Team: Mutual Aid

- Pay attention
 - Like vs Care
 - Check in with each other as necessary
- Offer assistance
 - Share expertise-knowledge
 - Personal (if and when appropriate)
- Accept help when offered



Speak up!



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Building Resiliency – Outside Work

Develop a tool box of skills to use when coping with effects of exposure outside your work environment

- Education or self-help
- Incorporate family
- Incorporate non-work team activities
- Ask for/accept help

Speak up!



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Incorporating Family

Spouse/Significant Other

- Overview of job-not the graphic content
- Use Guide to open conversation
- Talk about normal vs. warning signs
- Develop a code word
- Talk about intrusive thoughts
- Talk about hyper-vigilance



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Incorporating Family

Children

- Kids feel your emotion
- Help kids know they are not at fault
- OK to talk about job/feelings
- Answer any questions they may have
- Use age-appropriate explanations
- Reassure children of their positive role



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Tools & Techniques

Writing

- Gratitude List
- Coloring
- Journaling

Meditation/Mindfulness

- Focused Breathing
- Body Scan



Technology

- Happify, Positive Thinking, Calm, Worry Box, Breathe, H*nest Meditation



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Anyone can slay a
dragon, she told me,
but try waking up
every morning
& loving the world
all over again.
That's what takes
a real hero.

Brian Andreas



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Wrapping Up

What did we miss?

Questions?



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www.Shiftwellness.org

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